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PACIFISTS AND HYPHENATES NOT WANTED.

The present crisis is too serious to permit speech or action in anywise calculated to handicap the prosecution of the Great War. Before this one great objective all else must give way. It is lamentably poor patriotism to censure the President, whether the censure originate with Mr. Roosevelt, or with a pro-German American citizen. Mr. Wilson has deserved and in uniquely large degree has won, the confidence and respect of the American people. We are at war, and whatever personal opinion may have been heretofore, every person has now the one paramount duty of supporting the administration to the utmost of his ability.

Such patriotic support will mean subscribing to the Liberty Loan beyond our estimated ability. It will mean neither fostering nor tolerating disrespect for the Government. It will have a very definite influence in the prevention and immediate settlement of labor disputes. It will mean the following of the governmental policies appertaining to food supplies, wastage in public and private, industrial organization and all the other far-sighted plans which are being unfolded from Washington. It will mean increased appropriations in all communities for health conservation, which is the backbone of the nation, as is health in the army and navy the backbone of the military establishment.

At least while the war is upon us, we must of necessity have an autocratic government if it is to be powerful. We must all do some things we do not like. Individual freedom must be subor-

dated to national freedom. Organization and obedience to orders must be the watchwords. We must remind ourselves evermore that, if the issue of this war be not fought out to a finish in Europe, it will with absolute certainty seek us here in our homes.

As physicians we have a double responsibility. The one and greater, is the health of the Army and Navy. The other and nearly as great, is the health of the civilian population. Let not our loyalty be divided. Whether in civil or military service, let us learn the first lesson of the soldier, obedience.

EXTENDING FIELD OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE.

A review of the developing concept of preventive medicine shows an interesting trend from the original applications to the eruptive fevers and great epidemic maladies such as smallpox and plague. The history of this development would be a lengthy matter. It is however worth while in brief fashion to notice the present extension of the preventive field to new departments. Among these are the concerted lines of attack on specific diseases by improved methods of quarantine and destruction of infection. Also are to be included the vast extensions in industrial hygiene which have come about because they have been shown to pay commercially rather than because of their intrinsic public health value. Child hygiene and reduced infant mortality go hand in hand with better maternity results as inter-

preted in terms of decreased puerperal sepsis, post-confinement disabilities and maternal deaths.

Not the least important of the recent extensions of the field of preventive medicine is the rapidly increasing attention devoted to matters of social and personal hygiene, and also to the old problem of venereal prophylaxis. Better housing, better wages, better working and living conditions, better babies, better schools, better amusements, temperance in eating and drinking, sane and wholesome mental habits,—all of these are taking their rightful place in the scheme of preventive medicine as that term is coming to be understood. In short, all that makes for a happier, healthier and longer life for the average individual has a place in the scheme and a definite contribution to the cause of prevention of disease.

A noticeable feature recently in this connection has been the attention bestowed on old familiar disease dangers which, because of their familiarity had too often come to be considered, if considered at all, as necessary factors of every day life which were not to be attacked practically. An example was the attitude toward typhoid, tuberculosis and malaria. All of these were only a comparatively short time ago of wide distribution throughout the United States. The first two have received such efficient attention that already a distinct improvement is to be seen in their morbidity and mortality. The last has only now come into full recognition as a major public health problem of the United States from the standpoint of preventive medicine. And this is the more remarkable when it is recalled that the cause and means of conveyance have been understood for no short period.

In illustration of the late recognition of the public health importance of malaria, may be cited a contribution of J. W. Trask, assistant surgeon general of the U. S. Public Health Service.* Trask relates the difficulty experienced by the Public Health Service in securing data of any value on the actual incidence of malaria even in those districts where it was known to be endemic and common. This, of course, is but another example of the imperfect reporting of vital statistics in the United States and the limited registration area. He found three general endemic areas, one large district comprising the southeastern section of the entire country, one in the central river valleys of California and the last in New England and New York State. In addition it is present to some degree in practically every State of the union. He goes on to show that it is one of the chief health and economic problems of the country. Such a report shows the rapid extension of the concept of preventive medicine to new diseases and conditions which have an intimate bearing on public health.

THE ALCOHOL QUESTION.

V. In Conclusion.

There has recently come to our attention a pamphlet entitled "Medical Science on the Side of Alcohol," which is devoted to the views of Dr.

Abraham Jacobi, as reported to have been recorded in the New York Times (date not given). The first page does not interest us, as it gives the description of Dr. Jacobi from "Who's Who in America." Following this, however, is much of pertinent interest, not because of the exact views expressed, because they are most inexact, but because of the new illustration afforded of an eminent reputation becoming a cloak for ignorance.

We pick but two from many possible points of criticism of this pamphlet. Dr. Jacobi's opinions on alcohol as published in 1880 are quoted as having a present-day value. A great argument is made of the fact that certain pharmacologists ascribe a food value to alcohol. As for the first, it can be dismissed as irrelevant. As for the second, the argument should be completed with the statement that the food value of alcohol is recognized and that the same authorities who recognize it, also recognize and emphasize its limitations as a food. In other words, alcohol is only oxidized in the body to a limited extent, and therefore its food value is extremely limited. Along with this very minor action, goes the toxic action which has been previously described.

To repeat, this dragging of Dr. Jacobi into such an argument and on such a side of it, serves to cast great discredit on Dr. Jacobi's reputation as a scientist and humanitarian, for both of which he is justly noted. Well-earned reputation in one line does not empower a man to speak with authority in another line. At present we are forced to accept the verdict of the facts in the case as observed by present-day observers under carefully controlled conditions. It is a trick of the losing side to seek authority for itself in the protection and support of those whose authority is recognized by all. That the weight of a widely known physician's opinion should be sought is natural but the result is the opposite of that intended. Medical science today in no uncertain terms stands opposed to the use of alcohol as a beverage. The quotation of Dr. Jacobi as favoring the use of alcohol, is a compliment to the reputation of Dr. Jacobi, but serves to show that Dr. Jacobi is not in touch with the trend of present investigation and social conscience.

We have briefly touched on the social, economic, physiologic and public health indictment against alcoholic beverages. We have noted the fact that alcohol can help win the great war, or can seriously hamper that all-important necessity. No question enters of the personal desires or safety of the individual user of alcohol. That is not a matter for debate. The question, stripped of camouflage, is whether the United States can fight better with or without alcohol, whether social conditions and living conditions will be improved or deteriorated by alcohol, whether public health will be advanced or harmed by alcohol, whether economic efficiency will be increased or diminished by alcohol. We must face this question, whether we will or no. We cannot point to England or France or Japan and apply their experi-

* Am. Jour. Pub. Health, Dec., 1916.